

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 11-26, 28-49, 51-64, and 66-74 are pending after this amendment.

Applicant has amended claims 1-4, 19, 34, 35, 40, 45-49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 59-61, 63, 64, 69, 70, and 74 in order to more particularly define the invention. The amendments were not necessitated by the claim rejections. Applicant makes no admission as to the patentability or unpatentability of the originally filed claims.

Claims 5-10, 27, 50 and 65 have been cancelled.

The amendments and remarks presented herein are in response to the Final Office Action dated September 20, 2006.

The Examiner objected to claims 4, 49, and 64 because of minor informalities. Applicant has amended the claims herein to correct the informalities.

The Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 USC 112, ¶ 2 as not specifically pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter that the Applicant regards as the invention by reciting "the instructional tip" without sufficient antecedent basis. Claim 8 has been cancelled.

The Examiner rejected claims 60-74 under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. However, the Examiner failed to provide any justification for the 101 rejection. The Examiner stated that the specification

teaches that the system recited in claims 60 and 61 is software. Although the specification does teach that, in one embodiment, the system of the present invention is implemented as a computer system running a software application, such a teaching does not provide sufficient grounds for a 101 rejection. Specifically, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specify more particular grounds for the 101 rejection.

Furthermore, the Examiner stated that a program with no structural and functional interrelationship between computer elements is computer software by itself. Applicant respectfully points out that in both claims 60 and 61 a functional interrelationship between the claim elements is explicitly recited. Specifically, the second element of claim 60 recites “means for automatically configuring at least one functional component of the user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level” (emphasis added), which relates directly to the first element’s recitation of “means for detecting a user proficiency level with respect to a user interface.”

In claim 61, the user interface configuration module is recited to be coupled to the user proficiency level detector; furthermore, user interface configuration module is recited to automatically configure the functional component(s) of the user interface “responsive to the detected proficiency level” detected by the user proficiency level detector. Therefore, an interrelationship between the elements is again established.

Claims 62-74 depend from claim 61 and incorporate all of the above-mentioned recitations.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner's rejections on this ground be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 11-15, 17-18, 20-23, 30, 34-37, 44, 46-48, 51, 53-56, 60-63, 66, 68-69, 70-71 under 35 USC § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Rudd. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, which has been amended merely to clarify the nature of the invention, recites:

“A computer-implemented user interface configuration method, comprising:
detecting a user proficiency level with respect to a user interface, based
on user behavior with respect to the user interface; and
automatically configuring at least one functional component of the user
interface responsive to the detected proficiency level.”

The method of the claimed invention detects a user proficiency level with respect to a user interface. This detection is performed based on user behavior with respect to the user interface. Responsive to the detected proficiency level, at least one functional component of the user interface is automatically configured. In this manner, the claimed invention is able to provide automatic user interface configuration that responds to a detected proficiency level, without requiring the user to specify any configuration options.

As described at length in the specification, the claimed invention provides distinct advantages over prior art schemes that require a user to select from a plurality of user interface levels or options. Specifically, the detection and automatic configuration performed by the claimed invention provides a user with a user interface that is custom-tailored to his or her needs, without requiring the user to select options explicitly. Furthermore, the claimed invention provides additional advantages because of its detection and automatic configuration steps: for example, such a method allows the user interface to grow in complexity as the user behavior indicates greater degrees of proficiency on the user's part.

Rudd fails to describe any such steps. Rudd merely describes personalization techniques for electrical device interfaces, where the user manually selects customization options. The system receives a selection of an interface from a user, and presents the selected interface to the user. No automatic configuration takes place. See, for example, the following:

- Paragraph [0005]: "Such software personalization ... permits the users to customize their software interfaces."
- Paragraph [0007]: "In one arrangement, the system comprises means for presenting a variety of different default interface options to the user, ... means for receiving selection of a default interface made by a user, and means for presenting the selected interface to the user.

- Paragraph [0008]: “In one arrangement, the method comprises presenting a variety of different default interface options to the user, ... receiving selection of a default interface made by a user, and presenting the selected interface to the user.”
- Paragraph [0029]: “In a first manner of personalization, the user can select various default interfaces that are provided by the electrical device manufacturer or by third party software providers.”
- Paragraph [0033]: “Irrespective of the nature of the interface, it can be easily selected by the user. ... By way of example, this activation can occur in response to selection of a ‘personalize’ or ‘customize’ command of an interface presented to the user when the device solution application 216 is opened with the computing device 110. Once the interface personalization module 220 has been activated, a GUI can be presented to the user, as indicated in block 302, which presents the various default interface options to the user.”
- Paragraph [0034]: “At this point, the interface personalization module 220 can receive the user's selection.”

(Emphasis added). As can be seen from the above descriptive examples, Rudd describes a system where the customization takes place in response to a user's manual selection, and does not take place automatically in response to a

detected proficiency level. In short, Rudd requires the user to take action to select a user interface, and therefore fails to provide the unique advantages conferred by the invention claimed herein.

Furthermore, there is no hint or suggestion anywhere in Rudd of any technique for detecting a user proficiency level. Examiner asserted that such a teaching appears at [0036]. However, this paragraph merely states that some of the interfaces presented for user selection can be labeled “beginner,” “intermediate,” and “advanced.” Rudd does not teach detecting user proficiency with respect to the user interface; it merely describes user selection of an interface from among a number options. The fact that the options may be labeled “beginner,” “intermediate,” and “advanced” does not indicate imply teaching of any detection of user proficiency level as claimed herein. Nor does any teaching appear elsewhere in Rudd.

In fact, Rudd teaches away from detection of user proficiency level, since such detection would be of little use in a system (such as Rudd) where the user him- or herself makes the selection as to user interface options.

Claims 2-3, 11-15, 17-18, 20-23, 30, 34-37, and 44 depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 1. Therefore, for at least the reasons given above, these dependent claims are respectfully submitted to be patentable over the cited reference.

Claims 46-48, 51, and 53-56 are computer program product claims reciting limitations similar to those discussed above in connection with claim 1. There-

fore, for at least the reasons given above, these claims are respectfully submitted to be patentable over the cited reference.

Claims 60-63, 66, and 68-71 are system claims reciting limitations similar to those discussed above in connection with claim 1. Therefore, for at least the reasons given above, these claims are respectfully submitted to be patentable over the cited reference.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the 102 rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 16, 39-41, 49, and 64 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rudd in view of Howe. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4, which has been amended merely to correct a typographical error, recites:

“The method of claim 1, wherein automatically configuring the at least one functional component of the user interface comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of:

- enabling access to a command;
- disabling access to a command;
- changing an appearance of a command;
- enabling access to a menu;
- disabling access to a menu;
- changing an appearance of a menu;
- enabling access to a button;
- disabling access to a button;
- changing an appearance of a button;
- enabling access to a shortcut; and
- disabling access to a shortcut.”

Claim 4 depends from claim 1, and incorporates all of the limitations of claim 1, including those discussed above. As discussed above, Rudd fails to disclose any techniques for detecting a user proficiency level or for automatically configuring a user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level.

Howe does nothing to cure these deficiencies. Howe merely describes a method for distributing system files and system registry changes dynamically, and is not even directed toward any technique for automatic configuration of a user interface in response to a detected proficiency level.

The Examiner correctly stated that Rudd fails to disclose enabling or disabling access to a shortcut, and cited Howe as including such a teaching. On the contrary, the cited portion (col. 8, lines 37-44 and 47-50) of Howe merely describes application packages that can include shortcuts among other items. There is no hint or suggestion in Howe of any automatic configuration of a user interface that comprises enabling or disabling access to a shortcut, as recited in claim 4. Accordingly, claim 4 is submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Howe, taken alone or in any combination.

Claim 49 is a computer program product claim that recites limitations similar to those of claim 4. Claim 64 is a system claim that recites limitations similar to those of claim 4. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, claims 49 and 64 are submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Howe, taken alone or in any combination.

Accordingly, for the reasons given above, claim 49 is submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Howe, taken alone or in any combination.

Claim 16 recites:

“The method of claim 13, wherein the trigger event comprises system startup.”

Claim 16 depends from claim 13, which depends from and incorporates all of the limitations of claim 1, including those discussed above. As discussed above, Rudd fails to disclose any techniques for detecting a user proficiency level or for automatically configuring a user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level. Howe does nothing to cure these deficiencies.

Claim 16 further recites detecting the user proficiency level and automatically configuring at least one functional component of the user interface responsive to a trigger event, wherein the trigger event comprises system startup. Neither of the cited references provides any hint or suggestion of such a feature. The Examiner correctly stated that Rudd fails to disclose such a feature. As to Howe, the cited portion (col. 8, lines 31-50) merely describes client configuration upon startup, but does not describe detecting a user proficiency level upon startup, nor does it describe automatically configuring the user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level, as claimed herein. Accordingly, claim 16 is submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Howe, taken alone or in any combination.

Claims 39-41 depend from claim 36, which depends from and incorporates all of the limitations of claim 1, including those discussed above. As discussed above, Rudd fails to disclose any techniques for detecting a user proficiency level or for automatically configuring at least one functional component of a user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level. Howe does nothing to cure these deficiencies. Accordingly, claims 39-41 are submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Howe, taken alone or in any combination.

The Examiner rejected claims 5-6, 19, 25-26, 28-29, 33, 50, 52, 65, and 67 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rudd in view of Morrison. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 5-6, 50, and 65 have been cancelled.

Claims 19, 25-26, 28-29, and 33 depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 1, including those discussed above. Claim 52 depends from claim 46 and incorporates all of the limitations of claim 46, including those discussed above. Claim 67 depends from claim 61 and incorporates all of the limitations of claim 61, including those discussed above. As discussed above, Rudd fails to disclose any techniques for detecting a user proficiency level or for automatically configuring at least one functional component of a user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level.

Morrison does nothing to cure these deficiencies. Morrison merely describes customized presentation of help files, but does not teach detection of user

proficiency level and automatic configuration of a functional component of a user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level. In fact, Morrison explicitly states that it “allows the user to customize his or her experience with the help system,” (paragraph [0010]), thus teaching away from such automatic configuration responsive to a detected proficiency level.

Accordingly, for the reasons given above, claims 19, 25-26, 28-29, 33, 52, and 67 are submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Morrison, taken alone or in any combination.

The Examiner rejected claims 7-8, 10, and 27 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rudd in view of Gorbet. Claims 7-8, 10, and 27 have been cancelled.

The Examiner rejected claims 9, 24, 31-32, 38, 42-43, 45, 57-59, 72-74 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rudd in view of Aleksander. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 9 has been cancelled.

Claims 24, 31-32, 38, 42-43, and 45 depend from claim 1 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 1, including those discussed above. Claims 57-59 depend from claim 46 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 46, including those discussed above. Claims 72-74 depends from claim 61 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 61, including those discussed above. As discussed

above, Rudd fails to disclose any techniques for detecting a user proficiency level or for automatically configuring at least one functional component of a user interface responsive to the detected proficiency level.

Aleksander does nothing to cure these deficiencies. Aleksander merely describes mechanisms for determining when to provide assistance to an Internet browsing customer by monitoring various factors. There is no mention anywhere in Aleksander of any technique for automatically configuring at least one functional component of a user interface responsive to a detected proficiency level, as claimed herein. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, claims 24, 31-32, 38, 42-43, 45, 57-59, 72-74 are submitted to be patentably distinct from Rudd and Aleksander, taken alone or in any combination.

Support for the claim amendments appears in the originally filed specification at, for example, paragraphs [0045] and [0058]. No new matter has been added.

On the basis of the above amendments, consideration of this application and the early allowance of all claims herein are requested.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss the above amendments and remarks, or if the Examiner believes that for any reason direct contact with Applicant's representative would help to advance the prosecution of this case to finality, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,
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